

ECHOES OF YESTERDAY

Summit County Centennial History

Compiled by
MARIE ROSS PETERSON
Assisted by
MARY M. PEARSON



PUBLISHED BY
DAUGHTERS OF UTAH PIONEERS
OF
SUMMIT COUNTY
1947

by the name of John Williams was the first man to build a cabin on the bench, south of Kamas Fort. He built this cabin by the spring, where later Oscar Eskilson built his cabin.

From Oscar Eskilson's diary we learn that he came here with his father when he was four years old and lived by the spring at the foot of the Lemon dugway. That was in 1862. They lived here two years and then moved into Kamas and then to Wanship. When Mr. Eskilson was a man twenty-one years of age he came back to Francis in 1879, and built a one room log cabin by the spring where Mr. Williams had lived. There, Mr. Eskilson homesteaded one hundred and sixty acres of land. This spring came to be known as the Eskilson Spring. Later when the town was laid out and roads were made, this log house was moved west to the road. As his family grew, more rooms were added and rustic was put over the logs and painted. Mr. Eskilson lived here until he died in 1937. The home now belongs to Mrs. Randall, his daughter, and the one room log cabin is the living room of the Randall home.

There was no water on the bench except for a few small springs and these were insufficient for irrigation. In 1865 on the Tommy Davis homestead a well was dug one hundred and ten feet deep but they found no water. This well was dug by William Atkinson and years later this well was still open, protected only by three poles placed in pyramid shape and held together at the top by a rope wound around them. Mothers had to keep watch over their children to keep them from playing near it. Gradually the walls caved in and the well became filled with earth again.

Mrs. Ettie Gines says she remembers Mrs. Davis telling how she took her clothes down to the Provo River to wash them, they also had to have all of their culinary water from the river.

William Gines, a son of Samuel Gines, now living in Kamas said he remembers his mother telling him that the water first started to run on the bench from the Provo River the day he was born, August 7, 1873; and that she was so happy she felt like getting out of bed to see the water run. Up until this time little farming was done on the bench.

About the time that Mr. Eskilson came here, Minz Lark, Jack Richardson, Ruby Green, and Sanford Green built homes

on the Provo River in Knight's Hollow. In 1880 the country was surveyed and marked off in sections. People began moving in faster. Parley Neeley lived on what is now the Auerback Ranch—they lived there until a Scarlet Fever Epidemic swept the community and they lost two children. Mrs. Neeley so dreaded the place that they moved on to the bench.

Bill Pace, Abraham Hunter, Isaac Hunter Sr., Isaac Hunter Jr., Ray Hunter, Wm. Smith, John Smith (later known as John O. Driscoll), and Henry Smith were others who came by 1880, also Louie Strasberg, a Mr. Johnson, Mr. Burningham, Mr. Ashley, Barney Evans, Henry Suddter, Charley Woodard and Jed Woodard.

By 1883 Jack Richardson had moved on to the bench. We find also, Adam Paul, Nathen Neibour, Hyrum Workman, and B. F. Redmon.

In the 1890's Wm. Prescott, Dan Mitchell, Samuel Corbett, Francis Corbett, Marion Corbett, H. Gines, James Prescott, Amos Atkinson, Henry Atkinson, Alma Page, Wm. Woolstenhulme, Tom Naylor, Mr. Kirkham and Mr. Jones moved into Francis.

MIDWIVES

Mrs. Simantha Russell was the first midwife in Francis. She, with her husband, Charly, came to Francis about 1880; they built a log cabin at the east of Francis, in a hollow by a spring next to the foot hills; and homesteaded a tract of land. This house was later turned to face the road when permanent roads were built but it still stands today as part of the home of Ada Prescott.

Sister Russell was a licensed midwife and also studied in the profession of medicine so



Simantha Russell